

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 03701 152214Z

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ACTION EUR-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 3701

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, CA

SUBJ: ARCTIC GAS CONSIDERING ATTEMPT TO MERGE WITH ALCAN

1. IN TORONTO SEPTEMBER 9 ARCTIC GAS PRESIDENT WILDER
TOLD ME THAT HE HAS BEGUN CONVERSATION WITH SHELL CANADA
AND OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS OWN GROUP ON MERGING THE ARCTIC GAS
AND ALCAN APPLICATIONS.

2. CONCEPT WOULD BE TO FOLLOW THE MACKENZIE ROUTE
BUT FOR ARCTIC GAS TO CONSTRUCT ONLY FROM PRUDHOE BAY
DOWN TO THE 60TH PARALLEL (ALBERTA'S NORTHERN FRONTIER).
FROM THERE FOOTHILLS AND ALCAN INTERESTS WOULD BUILD A
SEPARATE CONNECTING PIPELINE SYSTEM TO THE STATES.

3. WILDER ADMITTED THAT NEGOTIATIONS OF THIS TYPE WOULD
BE VERY TIME CONSUMING AND DIFFICULT. HE SAID THAT IT
WOULD BE A MAJOR CONCESSION BY HIS GROUP, BUT PERHAPS
REALISTIC IN THAT HE NO LONGER RATES ARCTIC GAS CHANCES
AT BETTER THAN FIFTY-FIFTY. WILDER CITED AS A POSSIBLE
DISADVANTAGE FROM USG POINT OF VIEW THE INCLUSION OF
ALBERTA INTERESTS (NOTABLY ALBERTA GAS TRUNK LINE PRINCIPAL
BLAIR WHOM HE SAID WAS WIDELY DISTRUSTED BY MEMBERS OF THE
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ARCTIC GAS GROUP) IN A PIVOTAL ROLE.

4. WILDER PROMISED TO KEEP ME INFORMED IF HE PURSUES THIS
LINE. HE HAS NOT YET APPROACHED ANY OF INTERESTS IN ALCAN
GROUP.
ENDERS

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